



Montana Department of LABOR & INDUSTRY

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Date 11/6/13

For Immediate Release:

Tips for Buying and Selling Firewood

(Helena, MT) The temperatures are dropping and many Montanans use firewood to heat their homes. The Department of Labor and Industry has tips for those buying and selling firewood this winter. "We want to make sure that both the buyer and seller know what the legal measurement of a cord is, so that they have the information they need for a fair transaction", said Labor Commissioner Pam Bucy.

The only legal measurement and representation of firewood in Montana is a "cord" and fractional parts of a cord or cubic meter. A cord is the amount of firewood contained in 128 cubic feet of space when the firewood is tightly stacked. A cord of firewood is a pile which measures 4 feet wide, 4 feet high, and 8 feet long. But whatever the dimensions of the pile are, they must be equivalent to 128 cubic feet of tightly stacked firewood to be equal to one cord.

Prohibited terms of selling firewood are "face cord," "rack," "pile," "truckload" or similar language. Such terms are not to be used when advertising, offering for sale, or selling firewood.

To be sure you have a cord, stack the wood neatly by placing the wood in a line or a row, with individual pieces touching and parallel to each other, making sure that the wood is compact and has as few gaps as possible. Then measure the stack. If the width times the height times the length equals 128 cubic feet, you have a cord of firewood. When the wood is delivered, ask the seller to stack it (you may have to pay extra for this service) or stack the wood yourself.

When you purchase your fire wood, the seller is required to give to you a sales invoice that provides

- the name and address of the vendor
- the name and address of the purchaser
- the date delivered
- the quantity delivered and the quantity upon which the price is based, if this differs from the delivered quantity
- the price of the amount delivered
- the identity of the wood in the most descriptive terms commercially used, including any quality representation made in connection with the sale.

If you think you have been short-changed contact the seller to discuss the matter. If the seller can't or won't correct the problem, contact the State of Montana Weights & Measures Bureau at (406) 443-8065 before you burn any of the wood. It is also helpful to document the possible shortage by taking a picture of the stacked wood.

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